

... Let's Go

By LARRY MACARAY

Once in a while you meet an individual who takes the time to think. Most of us can count the number of these people that we know on one hand. This type of an individual makes a very subtle but effective impression on us.

The "thinking" that I'm talking about is not the ever-present activity that occurs automatically as we go about the mechanics of living day-to-day. Rather, it is a creative process that raises questions—feeling that there is always a better way to do everything—that there are still answers to be found to important questions—that a person's opinion is only as good as the information on which it is based.

Robert C. Niece, author of "ART: an approach," is such a person. He has been an art instructor at El Camino College since 1957, specializing in design. The course of his creation, "Art in Modern Life," needed a textbook in order to teach it properly, so he wrote it.

KNOWING Robert Niece is an enlightening experience for both his students and his faculty friends. Old concepts of community planning are torn apart... the validity of "extras" on automobiles is questioned... what function do the cuffs of men's pants perform... what's the big deal in keeping up with our neighbors?

His accomplishments are many and of the highest caliber of activity. They range from designing and producing the 40' tall theme mobile fountain sculpture for the California State Fair in 1952 to being elected to the Executive Council of the Southern California Art Education Assn. in 1961.

NEW ZEALAND has become an attraction for Niece and much to our sorrow, he has accepted a position to teach there, starting in the fall. He has been appointed as head of the Industrial Design Department, School of Design, Well-

ington Polytechnic, Wellington, New Zealand.

His thinking is important in this present scheme of modern living. About his book he says: "This is a critical book. It is based on a belief that a strong need exists for a healthy approach to the evaluation of all forms of art—for several reasons among which are personal satisfaction, intelligent consumption, and personal growth as an individual."

About art and culture he says: "The ancient cultures still vaguely admired by most Americans had as part of their makeup, a great respect for art as a vital, expressive, creative force. This respect is certainly difficult to find in our own culture—to our loss."

"ART IN OUR TIME seems of little concern to the average man—playing a small part indeed in his understanding of life's richness. His pleasures are as mass produced as his opinions and values. Ask him for an evaluation of the design of a car and you will get, instead, advertising slogans, promotional 'information,' and prejudices based on a lifetime of exposure to these same slogans. This passes for 'thinking' in our culture and is so much easier."

About interior decoration, he says: "The homes shown in the finest professional magazines are the happy exception—and do not in any way represent the rule. On the walls of the overwhelming majority of houses there are poor reproductions of third rate paintings picked because they match the drapes or because the subject was so cute rather than good reproductions of good works by good artists who have something to say. Poorly designed furniture bought because it was fashionable, poorly arranged, impossible to keep clean—these how we do it."

ABOUT THINKING he says: "Thinking for one's self is the only kind of thinking worth doing. You will probably disagree with me in many of my choices of examples and with my conclusions. Do so. An irritant may sometimes act as a stimulant. We are after understanding rather than agreement."

The right to think for ourselves was the most precious thing our forefathers could hand down to us and, unless we are careful, we may lose this right through nonexercise of it. There are plenty of people who would love to do our thinking for us. Sometimes their intentions are of the best—sometimes not. In either case we lose."

His book is packed with creative stimulation. Every page opens up new avenues of thought. Get a copy of it and you won't be disappointed. Wm. C. Brown Co. in Dubuque, Iowa, is the publisher.

Lewis Wins Top Prize For Speech

Rodney Lewis, speaking on "The Dreaded Profile," won the best prepared speech award at the weekly meeting of the Torrance-Lomita Realtors Toastmasters Club. The breakfast meeting was chaired by Walter Boden. Barbara Marks picked up the impromptu speaking award with a talk on "Problems in a Changing World." George Harbour served as general evaluator for the session.

Charles Cederlof was awarded the best critic award for his evaluation of a prepared speech.

Membership is still open in the group. Realtors interested in membership should contact Bob Wessfield at FR 8-8351. There will be no meeting Thursday.

Births

SOUTH BAY HOSPITAL
 GRAY—Mr. and Mrs. Robert W., 1829 E. 215th St., a girl, Aileen, June 13.
 BAKER—Mr. and Mrs. Fenimore, 3115 Winlock Rd., a girl, Kristina Michelle, June 13.
 BURR—Mr. and Mrs. B. L., 4708 Sepulveda Blvd., a boy, Richard James, June 13.
 GILBERT—Mr. and Mrs. Ronald J., 2617 Almo St., a boy, Lance James, June 14.
 ROHNI—Mr. and Mrs. Albert J., 2140 Vicky Ave., a girl, Lisa Jean, June 14.
 PIERSON—Mr. and Mrs. Nils M., 2021 Park St., a girl, Stacey Ann, June 16.
 JORDAN—Mr. and Mrs. Lyle W. Jr., 2216 Danah St., a girl, Wendie Ellen, June 16.
 INGALLS—Mr. and Mrs. John R., 2710 Loflyview Dr., a girl, Kristy-ann Desiree, June 19.
 KELLER—Mr. and Mrs. William K., 4528 Green Meadows Ave., a girl, Susan Louise, June 20.

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